



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/809,501	03/26/2004	Kazuhiro Oki	8012-1240	7886
466	7590	09/11/2007	EXAMINER	
YOUNG & THOMPSON			PADGETT, MARIANNE L	
745 SOUTH 23RD STREET			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2ND FLOOR			1762	
ARLINGTON, VA 22202				

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
09/11/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/809,501	OKI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Marianne L. Padgett	1762	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 3/26/04 & 8/20/07.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/26/04</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 1762

1. Applicant's election without traverse of the group I, method claims 1-20 in the reply filed on 8/20/2007 is acknowledged.

2. Claims 1-20 are objected to because of the following informalities: in independent claim 1, line 12, the phrase "in a side...", in the context used is non-idiomatic, and would appear to probably be intended to say --on a side...--.

Claim 9 is objected to for improper grammar, since the sentence lacks a verb.

Appropriate correction is required.

3. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Use of relative terms in the claims, that lack clear metes and bounds in the claims, or in a clear definition in the specification or in relevant cited prior art, is vague and indefinite period in the last line of claim 1, see "high", or in line 11 of claim 1, see "close". Also, in line for of claim 1 "almost" before "vertically" may be considered relative, particularly when considering further dependent claims.

Claim 3 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Independent claim 1 requires "almost vertically...", but dependent claim 3 expands the range to include 90°, which it is vertical (therefore not almost, which requires the position to be slightly less than vertical). Further note, this may be considered to cast doubt on what constitutes "almost vertical", especially as 60° from horizontal (i.e. 30° from vertical) is supposedly a narrower scope than the preceding claim to "almost vertical", which thus must include a wider range of angles, such as 45° from horizontal or vertical, which most people would not consider "almost vertical"!

Art Unit: 1762

It is unclear what relationship the limitation of claim for has to the process in the independent claim, since at no time in the claim drying process is the transport of the web stopped, as the process being described appears to be a continuous process, considering that the web is a continuous substrate which is being transported "almost vertically and upward... immediately after the coating", hence to stop the web's transport would appear to violate the required condition of "immediately..."

Claim 5 might be considered unclear or ambiguous, because it appears to be requiring the claimed drying device to be nonfunctional, since it is apparently not performing its function, or claim 5 is contradictory since drying of the coating layer has already been claimed to occur, or (the probable intent) these 2 drying limitations each only perform partial drying of the original amount of solvent in the coating, however the intent of the claimed process would benefit from clarification.

In claim 6, lines 2-3, "said first guide roller" lacks antecedent basis, as it has not been previously (clearly) introduced. How is it related to the "one of our larger number of guide rollers" in line 6 of claim 1? Is it one of them, or is it in some positional relationship associated with these previous guide rollers?

In claim 8, does the limitation "wherein said drying device is disposed within a 0.7m after the coating" mean that the **whole** drying device has to fit in the space between a 0-0.7 m of when the coating occurs ("the coating" is noted to mean the action of coating & not the results, see line 2 of claim 1), or does it mean the start of the drying device is positioned somewhere between zero-zero .7 m after the coating operation is completed? As the claim might be considered to read on either of these options, its meaning can be considered ambiguous & either meaning will be accepted as reading on the claims, pending clarification.

In claim 9, line 4, "said transporting position" lacks any antecedent basis, as no such position has ever been introduced, although it is noted that specific orientations of "almost vertically and upward... immediately after coating" & "the upward transporting... from an almost vertical direction towards a horizontal direction gradually" are all present in the independent claim, but do not necessarily read on the

Art Unit: 1762

claimed "... position", nor are any of these limitations necessarily within the drying device, since in independent claim 1, the limitation of "immediately after the coating" associated with the transporting, may or may not be the same thing as "just after the coating" associated with the drying device (i.e. as claimed, the drying device may start before, during, or after any of these limitations with respect to the orientation of the web).

Use a phraseology such as "plate-like" is considered vague and indefinite, as it is ambiguous or unclear, possibly meaning a plate or shaped like a plate, or flat, or possibly meaning something that is like a plate, but is not a plate. See claims 10 & 12-13.

In claim 11, "each said device" is unclear, since only one new device was introduced in claim 9, i.e. "a device for condensing and recovering..." (emphasis added), and the only other device introduced in the claim sequence was "a drying device", however it would be difficult to dispose it within itself.

In claim 13, the phrase "solvent flows in effect of gravity is provided on a surface of said plate-like member" does not make sense, has no clear meaning, and is not idiomatic English. From the present unclear praising, the examiner cannot tell whether the intent is for the solvent to flow with or opposed to gravity on the plate surface, hence for the claim as presently written, it will be sufficient for the solvent to flow on an appropriate surface in order to read on the limitation.

What is encompassed by "both sides of said drying device" is uncertain, as the shape of the drying device is otherwise undefined, and as a 3-dimensional object may have many sides more than two (i.e. both), for instance if the drying device is rectangular, there are six sides, if it's cylindrical, besides are less distinct, but there are two ends & opposed sides diametrically opposite all around a cylindrical wall, etc. One possible interpretation of this claim language, is that while the solvent vapor cannot escape from two sides (= both sides), it may be allowed to escape from any of the other side may exist. As this is unlikely to the applicant's intent, clarification of the claimed structure/process would probably be desirable.

Art Unit: 1762

At the end of claim 17, the reference to "within said drier", I lacks any antecedent basis, as it is inconsistent with any limitation introduced in claim 1, from which claim 17 depends. Is this limitation intended to refer to the limitation of "drying device", or noting previous dependence included claim 5, was it intended to refer to the "a heat-drying means disposed downstream...", or what, as the term in claim 17 is inconsistent with the language used in either case. Furthermore, the claimed location of "a heating device" to be "in a side of a non-coating surface of a transport position of said web with it and said drier" is less than clear, as the examiner has no reasons to suspect that any surface of the dryer is capable of causing coating, hence it is impossible to determine what side the heating device is placed into within the drier whose relationship to the process is impossible determine.

In claim 18, the phrase "said wet coating layer" is inconsistent with any previously introduced terminology, and furthermore as indicated from the limitations of claims 16 or 5, the claimed drying device need not necessarily remove all the solvent, such that the coating layer may still contain solvent & be considered "wet", it is unclear when this thickness limitation is intended to apply. Would applicant's intent for this claim be -- a thickness of said coating layer before any drying is performed, is... --, and would such phrasing be supported by the original specification?

In claim 19, does "back-up member" have some particular meaning in the extrusion art, or does it have the conventional meaning of something that is extra in case the primary object is nonfunctional?

In claim 20, the examiner notes that a "graver" is either a sculptor or a person who in graves, i.e. an engraver or any of various cutting or shaping tools used for graving or in hand metal turning, as these would not appear to be the appropriate terms for a coder that is applying solution, the option of "a graver coater is unclear. Would applicant perchance mean -- gravure --, such as in gravure roll, hence gravure coater?

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

Art Unit: 1762

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary.

Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

6. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 14-15 & 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Strobush et al. (5,881,476).

Claims 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Strobush et al. (476).

Strobush et al. teach a process and apparatus (figures 5-12 & 23) for drying coatings on the substrate, where the coatings may be comprised of solid material dissolved, dispersed or emulsified in an evaporable liquid vehicle (e.g. solvent, inclusive organic solvents), where their process is particularly directed to minimizing the recognized problems caused by air turbulence, such as defect formation like mottle, that are known to increase with increasing velocity of drying gas, via minimizing disturbance of gas adjacent to the coated side of the substrate. A drying enclosure (17) is employed with configurations therein designed to minimize mottle, where the first drying zone (18) is said to be of primary importance,

Art Unit: 1762

and employs drying gas (e.g. heated air or inert gas) supplied from below the substrate, where it's coated surface is face up, with exhaust ports above & below the substrate, which collect evaporated solvent in plenums, and with independent control of temperature & gas velocity of individual drying gas inputs making possible the creation of subzones within the first drying zone (zones may or may not be partitioned) & control of the solvent level within the drying enclosure. It is further taught that the drying gas may be replaced by or augmented by use of other individually controllable heat sources, such as heated rollers, IR heaters, or heated plates. The drying process is taught to be controlled to prevent or minimize mottle formation by keeping the heat transfer rates below a threshold for causing mottle, where as a particular coating is tried, it will eventually reach a point at which it becomes "virtually mottle-proof", after which the heat transfer rates can be significantly increased.

The figures illustrating the apparatus, particularly figure 5 or 23, show the coated substrate being transported upward, with in the scope of "almost vertically" (as discussed above in light of the specification), immediately after coating, where rollers are illustrated to redirect the path into a gently inclined arc that can be said to be "towards a horizontal direction gradually", as the arc is tangent to horizontal. Strobush et al. also note that other path shapes may be employed. A variety of thin film coding techniques requiring drying as taught are mentioned, inclusive of forward or reverse roll coating, wire-wound coating, blade coating, slot coating, slide coating, curtain coating, etc. (note slot coating is inclusive of extrusion die coating, while roll coating is inclusive of gravure, probably = graver & wire-wound coating ≡ wire-bar coating). In Strobush et al.'s example 1, 2 coating layers are applied via coating die (≡ extrusion coater) simultaneously, which both employ organic solvents of 2-butanone & methanol, in weight percentages greater than 50% (col. 18, line 45-col. 19, lines 23), where the wet thickness of the emulsion layer is 81.3 μm , while the wet thickness of the topcoat is 19.1 μm (col. 19, lines 24-53), noting the topcoat reads on applicants' claimed thickness. Various drying conditions were applied to determine their effects on mottling (col. 20). The examples on cols. 18-21, were noted to only

Art Unit: 1762

be exemplary, and employed different process speeds (0.38, 0.508, or 0.127 m/s) & distances between coating and entrance into the dryer (4 or 3 m), where example 4 teaches in col. 21, lines 43- 46, that the atmosphere is inert gas and the partial pressure of the solvent could be controlled using a "condenser loop".

It is noted that while Strobush et al. do not mention "and extrusion die coater" or a "wirebar coach her" or a "graver coater" (probably gravure) by name they specifically use die coaters & mention either equivalent names or general categories of these types of claimed coaters such that the taught useful techniques are considered inclusive of those claimed, or alternately would have been expected by one of ordinary skill in the art to be effectively treated by the drying process of Strobush et al., as they all may employ coating materials containing solvents as claimed, where the process of Strobush et al. is not dependent on the particular solution/solvent containing material application process.

In Strobush et al., particularly see the abstract; col. 1, lines 15-50 & 67-col. 2, lines 60; col. 6, lines 21-51+; col. 8, lines 64-col. 9, lines 59, especially 1-8, 13-15, 20-48; col. 10, lines 1-10, 29-39 & 52- col. 11, lines 27 & 38-48; col. 12, lines 14-67+; col. 13, lines 34-38; col. 14, lines 15-35; col. 15, lines 16- 30+; col. 16, lines 14-25, 40-48 & 55-61)

The examiner notes, that when the apparatus of Strobush et al. is turned off, those the transport of the web must inherently be stopped, as would the input of drying gas also be stopped, hence the velocity thereof would have been be zero.

7. Claim 3, 6-9, 11 & 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Strobush et al. (476), optionally in view of Aoki (2002/0031608 A1) for claims 3 & 6-8.

Strobush et al. do not discuss any particular angle of inclination to the horizontal for its illustrated initial transporting position after coating, however given the illustrations, such as provided by figure 5, this would have been suggested to one of ordinary skill to employ inclinations in a range around those approximating illustrated configurations, which would have been expected to be inclusive of claimed

Art Unit: 1762

angles, where specific choice would have very depended on particular coating techniques, coating materials & their properties, such as viscosity, etc.

While the exemplary distances between the start of the drying device & the coater provided in the specific examples (note illustrated guide roller at entrance of drying device) are longer than the claimed distances of "less than 2m" or "within 0.7m", it would have been obvious to an ordinary skill in the art that the particular examples of distance in the exemplary processes were not limiting to Strobush et al.'s process & apparatus structure, since they do not place limits thereon in their general discussion & employ varying short distances in the examples, thus one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to employ such distances as taught or shorter distances, dependent on local conditions, materials being processed, and keeping in mind the teachings of Strobush et al. with respect to the importance of the initial drying zone in preventing defect formation (mottling) in the coating, hence would have been expected to recognize that the sooner (i.e. shorter distances, dependent on speed) the coating is enclosed in the controlled drying environment, the sooner it is protected from environmental effects that could cause defects, thus suggesting to one of ordinary skill the obviousness of employing distances as claimed. Also note that guide roller intervals within Strobush et al.'s dryer are not discuss, however are considered obvious variations on the illustrated configuration, as they would have been expected to be configured so as to adequately support the coated web substrate, thus would reasonably have been expected to be inclusive of less than 2 m, and further considering that the guide rollers may be heated rollers as were taught for possibly providing heat or augmenting the heated drying process, and thus would have been positioned to adequately provide the individually controlled subzones, which has noted in col. 14, lines 15-25, were contemplated to include those down to infinitesimally small size, thus suggestive of space as claimed for heated guide rollers.

Optionally, Aoki (abstract; figures 3 & 5; [0002-4]; [0009-11]; [0027-28, esp.28]; [0031]; [0034-35] & [0038]) is also concerned with the effect of turbulence on a coating that is to be dried, and supports

the above contention that the time before entering the drying zone & turbulence that may be present between coating and drying can be critical to the results of the drying, where they teach that the time after coating prior to entry into the drying zone should be no more than five seconds, preferably no more than three seconds, where the speed of the support is preferably between 0.5 and 1000 m/minute (i.e. maximum of 18 m/sec). It would've been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art to apply the teachings Aoki to those of Strobush et al., as there directed to complementary considerations with respect to drying, plus, as illustrated in figures 3 & 5, are considered with respect to analogous coater & dryer configurations. It has noted that all the speeds employed in the examples of Strobush at all are within the speeds preferred by Aoki, where it is noted that for the preferred 3 second maximum for entering the dryer combination with Strobush et al.'s example for would give $3s(0.127\text{ m/s}) = 0.371\text{ m}$, thus substantiating above arguments. It is further noted with respect to the configurations as illustrated in figures 3 & 5 of Aoki that the coating device (configured like an extrusion coater as in Aoki's figure 1, [0028]), applies the coating at a vertical orientation of the web, which as it leaves the coater via action of the opposing guide roller immediately leaves vertical to be almost vertical and proceed gradually upward at an inclination of the more surface, which becomes more gradual & arced as illustrated in the primary reference as it enters the dryer. Given the similarities of these configurations, plus the above observations concerning the wide applicability of different coating techniques to Strobush et al.'s drying process, it would've been obvious to employ coating configurations as illustrated by Aoki for the coating techniques of Strobush et al., thus optionally providing cumulative motivation, support for the above arguments & reasons for obviousness with respect to the claimed angles of inclination.

While Strobush et al. do not teach covering condensed organic solvent, the suggestion in example 4 of employing "a condenser loop" to control the pressure of evaporated solvent is suggestive of the solvent being collected, and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that as one is already employing this means which will collect the solvent to also recover that solvent, especially for

Art Unit: 1762

organic solvents for which there are environmental regulations concerning required recovery thereof, which would provide ample motivation to recover such collective solvents. Note Strobush et al. teach subzones for drying, that may be partitioned, it would be have been expected by one of ordinary skill in the art as the condition to each subzone are individually controllable, to have the taught condensers in each zone.

While Strobush et al. does not discuss a particular range of weight percentages, such as applicants' claimed "at least 70% by mass", for the degree of drying that takes place in their apparatus, their discussion which requires the initial drying, such as in the first zone, to dry the coating sufficient to the evaporated enough solvent that the coating becomes "virtually mottle-proof", would have been expected by one of ordinary skill in the art to be inclusive of claimed percentages for a great many coatings, noting that what percentage of solvent needs to be removed to reach the state would have been at least partially dependent on the properties of the individual coating materials, but would have been expected to be sufficient for the coating to have "set" thus reasonably inclusive of having a fairly small value of solvent remaining, such as less than 20% by weight. It is further noted that the particular percentage required in claim 16 is fairly meaningless with respect to significance to the process, as it requires that "...dries at least 70% by mass of said organic solvent contained in said coating solution", where since one has no idea what the original amount of solvent was, there is no way to determine how much 30% or less of an unknown amount constitutes, nor can this unknown amount have any meeting with respect to effects on the coating, etc.

8. The patent to Su et al. (6,824,828 B2) is of interest for its comments in col. 1, lines 55-60 concerning stringent regulations regarding recovery of solvents. Other art having further coater & dryer configurations related to the claims include Cabelli (5,814,376: figures 29-31; col. 22, lines 61-col. 24, line 14 concerning gravure coating); Tsuda et al. (4,223,052); and Yamazaki et al. (5,536,535: figure 2).

Art Unit: 1762

9. Claims 10 & 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Strobush et al. (476), optionally in view of Aoki (2002/0031608 A1) as applied to claims 1-9, 11 & 14-20 above, and further in view of Reznik (4,694,586).

While Strobush et al. does not provide any details on the structure of the solvent condenser loop used to control the pressure of solvent in the dryer atmosphere, solvent condensers employed in dryers are old and well-known, as exemplified by Reznik, who teaches that his technique is useful for both maintaining the solvent vapor content of the atmosphere, plus condensing & recovering solvent dried from a coating, where the requirements for this procedure include the space in the dryer being a confined space of limited volume, and where cooling means, such as cooling coils that may be in a wall used for condensation, or cooled walls of the drying space, are employed to condense excess vapor in the atmosphere, which runs down the wall due to gravity, to be recovered in a collection tray (abstract; figures, esp. 1-2 & 5-6; col. 1, lines 15-23 & 55-62; col. 2, lines 7-25, 47-52 & 58-66; col. 3, lines 1-8 & 57-65; col. 4, lines 13-18 & 25-45; col. 5, lines 14-25 & 39-53; col. 6, lines 20-30 & 56-66). Giving that the condensing apparatus employed in the dryer of Reznik may be used for the stated purpose desired in example 4 of Strobush et al., it would've been obvious to one of ordinary skill the art to apply the teachings of condensation/solvent vapor pressure control to the drying apparatus of Strobush et al., with the expectation of effectively controlling solvent vapor pressure as desired, since both drying apparatus are dealing with housings creating limited confined spaces. Furthermore, recovering evaporated solvent, via such a recovery operation would have been motivated for reasons as stated above & as given in Reznik. It is further noted that use of planar surfaces for the cooled condensation recovery surface, would have been consistent with the illustrated structure of Strobush et al. as combined with Reznik for the condensation/solvent recovery means, hence would have been found by one of ordinary skill in the art to be an obvious adaptation of Reznik's teachings to the Strobush et al. process, where such planar surfaces would have read on the claimed "plate-like member".

Art Unit: 1762

10. Other art of interest for discussing solvent condensation processes with respect dryers include Griffin (4378388); Kingsley, Jr. (4421794) & Tsujimoto (2004/0212892 A1), the last of which is not prior art. The British patent to Kores Holding Zug A.G. & US patent to Hebel, cited by applicant are noted to have further relevant teachings on condensation of solvent vapor from dryers.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Marianne L. Padgett whose telephone number is (571) 272-1425. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from about 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Timothy Meeks, can be reached at (571) 272-1423. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MLP/dictation software

9/7-8/2007



MARIANNE PADGETT
PRIMARY EXAMINER